PENGE AND CATOR

Summer 2023

NEWS

Bromley Labour

CATOR TREE MASSACRE

Many residents will be aware that that on 10th June, in an area of land adjacent to Cator Park, 131 trees which were under a Tree Protection Order were cut down.

Your local councillors, Kathy Bance, Simon Jeal, and Kevin Kennedy-Brooks, after being alerted by concerned residents, immediately contacted the police, Ward Security, and completed a site visit to assess the ongoing situation. Bromley Council were also informed.

Since then, they have engaged with the Council's *Environment and Enforcement Teams* to push for action to safeguard the remaining trees. While the land is privately owned it is still Metropolitan Open Land. As such it appears that this was a serious breach of the *Section 210 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).* **This can have significant financial penalties.** The council have assured our Councillors they are progressing an investigation with a view to prosecuting those responsible.

Subsequently Cllr Kennedy-Brooks signed a witness statement in co-operation with legal services leading to the enacting of a temporary injunction order. Officers are confident this will be made permanent. This is an **even stronger restriction** on the landowner felling trees and a breach can lead to imprisonment.

All the Penge Councillors continue to work on this issue. Due to legal processes being undertaken and the need to collect all evidence etc, progress may not be as fast as we would like but they will continue to update residents, on all relevant matters as best they can, including the removal of the felled trees and planting of new trees on Council land.

Kathy, Kevin and Simon would like to thank the *Friends of Cator Park and Alexandra Recreation Ground* and the many other residents who intervened and are continuing to respond to and publicise this horrific event and look for positive responses to benefit and protect the area.

LOCAL TICKET OFFICE CLOSURES

Following cuts to our local train services last year, Train companies are now looking to close ticket offices at almost all local stations, including Penge East and Kent House.

Kathy, Kevin, and Simon share the serious concerns many have raised on the impact these closures will have for passengers. It is not possible to buy some types of tickets online, ticket vending machines are not accessible to all and there are concerns about the impact on people with disabilities.

They have submitted a response to Southeastern's consultation strongly opposing the plans.

Labour

bromleylabour.org.uk

Penge and Cator Labour Party

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PLANS FOR KENTWOOD SCHOOL DROPPED

Several years ago your Councillors reported to residents on plans by Harris Federation to build a 1,000 pupil secondary school and sixth form on the Kentwood site in Penge.

Our local area badly needs more secondary school places. However, your local Councillors also shared the concerns of residents living close by that an additional school on the site would have to be a 'tower block', there would be insufficient space and the development would cause significant problems for residents.

They highlighted the risk that planning permission would not be granted and asked council officers to prepare back up plans and look at other locations. Despite this, **Conservative Councillors voted to continue with the plans;** the next phase was for the Department of Education to conduct a 'feasibility study,' which has taken years.

In May Councillors were notified that Harris Federation have **withdrawn their application** to open the school due to 'site difficulties that could not be overcome'. The Council has confirmed there are now **no plans** to develop on the site- the Adult Education centre, primary school and nursery will **continue to operate there.**

Because we know there is a severe need for new secondary school places in this part of Bromley, Kevin and Simon met with the Director of Education to understand what alternatives the council are now considering. They confirmed they have **£3 million in funding to provide school** places and are talking to existing schools about adding places- they are expecting a report with details of future plans and will keep residents updated.

BOUNDARY CHANGE UPDATE

As you may have heard there will most likely be new boundaries for our area in the next General Election.

Penge and Cator will no longer be in the constituency of Lewisham West and Penge, but instead part of a new Beckenham and Penge constituency. This does not affect your local Councillors who were re-elected last year and will continue to represent you.

BLENHEIM CENTRE CONCERNS

The Councillors have been tracking responses to this planning application and are aware many residents raised objections to redevelop the Blenheim centre with 250 new flats, including an 18 storey tower block.

The application was submitted by the developers in March- along with many residents Cllrs Kathy Bance and Simon Jeal have raised concerns about the plans in their current form. As Cllr Kennedy-Brooks sits on the committee which will decide this application he cannot take a view prior to the meeting. The application is now being reviewed by planning officers, who have informed the Councillors they anticipate this coming to a committee for a decision in the autumn of this year. **Your Councillors will continue to monitor this application closely and will ensure resident's views are heard by the committee.**

CONTACT YOUR LABOUR TEAM

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We hold surgeries on...

1st SATURDAY OF THE MONTH Empire Square, on Penge High Street, from 10:45-12:15

2nd THURSDAY OF THE MONTH and at Queen Adelaide Community Centre (SE20 7EA) from 4-5pm.

ALSO... Sydenham Tennis Club (regular dates to be confirmed)

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Penge and Cator Labour Party

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